

Minnesota Storytime  
Reading Guide

**Title:** *Millions of Cats*

**Author/Illustrator:** Wanda Gag

**Publisher and  
Copyright Date:** Coward-MacCann, 1928

**Connection to  
Minnesota:** Minnesota author/illustrator

**Summary:** This is the story of a very old man who went off in search of one kitten and returned with "hundreds of cats, thousands of cats, millions and billions and trillions of cats." This story, written in 1928, is an American classic and a Newbery Honor Book.

**Suggested ages:** 4-6

**Tips for Reading:**

- Ask the children to repeat the phrase "hundreds of cats, thousands of cats, millions and billions and trillions of cats" after it appears each time in the story.
- Encourage the children to make cat sounds, such as "Mew, Mew."

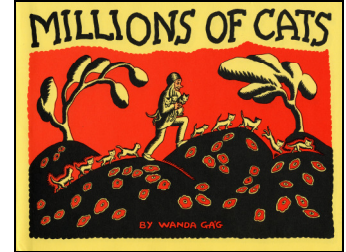
**Questions  
before reading:**

- Do you or your family have any pets? Tell us about them.
- Who takes care of the pets?
- What kinds of things need to be done for your pets?

**To Introduce  
this story say:** We're going to read a book that was written 75 years ago about an old man and an old woman who were very lonely and wanted a cat to keep them company.

**Questions  
After Reading:**

- Why did the old man have trouble deciding which cat to pick?
- Do you ever have trouble deciding things when you have lots of choices, like what flavor ice cream you'd like?
- Why did the cats start arguing with each other?
- At the end of the story, how did the old man and the old woman feel?



## RELATED ACTIVITIES

- Language:**
- Play a game with the children by naming an animal and have them provide the name of the young or baby animal (e.g. cat – kitten, dog – puppy).
- Math:**
- Develop a math lesson or game to further explain hundreds, thousands, millions, billions and trillions (e.g. how many zeros in a hundred, thousand, etc.).
- Other:**
- Think about adopting or buying a cat (or other animal) for a pet. For more information, contact your local humane society or pet store.
- Suggestions for English Language Learners:**
- Have the children “retell” the story by explaining the illustrations on each page.
  - Ask the children the word for “cat” in their native language.
- Related Books:**
- ***Cat, You Better Come Home*** by Garrison Keillor, illustrated by Steve Johnson and Lou Fancher (Penguin Putnam, 1997)
  - ***John Brown, Rose and the Midnight Cat*** by Jenny Wagner, illustrated by Ron Brooks (Kestrel Books, 1977)
  - ***Barn Cat*** by Carol P. Saul, illustrated by Mary Azarian (Brown, Little and Company, 2001)
  - ***Daddy, Could I Have an Elephant*** by Jake Wolf, illustrated by Marilyn Hafner (Greenwillow, 1996)

